

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated July 23, 2004, claim 5 has been canceled and claims 1, 4, 6, 12, 17 have been amended. Claims 1-4 and 6-20 are in the case. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are requested.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-4 and 6-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kikinis (U.S. Patent No. 5,727,159).

The Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection based on the arguments below and the amendments to the claims.

The Applicants contend that the Kikinis reference does not disclose all of the elements of the Applicant's claimed invention.

However, the Examiner stated that claim 5 was allowable. As such, although the Applicant contends that the claims are allowable before the present amendment, in an effort to expedite the prosecution of this case, the Applicant has added the limitations of allowed claim 5 into independent claims 1, 6, 12 and 17 and canceled claim 5. Hence, the Applicant submits that claims 1-4 and 6-20 are allowable.

Consequently, the rejections are moot. The Applicants, therefore, respectfully submit that the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) should be withdrawn.


With regard to the dependent claims, since they depend from the above-argued respective independent claims, they are therefore patentable on at least the same basis. (MPEP § 2143.03).

In view of the arguments and amendments set forth above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the rejected claims are in immediate condition for allowance. The Examiner is therefore respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding claim rejections and to pass this application to issue. Additionally, in an effort to expedite and further the prosecution of the subject application, the

Applicants kindly invite the Examiner to telephone the Applicants' attorney at
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Respectfully submitted,
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